

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) ~~Method~~ A method for electrically discharging a printing material (2) to which toner has been applied, in particular for an electrophotographic printing machine, ~~characterized in that the printing material (2) is discharged electrically in certain areas~~ the printing material having toner areas displaying higher toner densities than in other areas of the printing material displaying lower toner densities, an electrical discharge energy being provided by a discharge device and being adjusted as a function of the toner density to be applied on respectively individual strips of a series of strips dividing the printing material on the upper side and /or the underside of said printing material, one strip corresponding approximately to the width of the discharge device and extending from one longitudinal side to the opposite longitudinal side of the printing material.

2. (canceled)

3. (canceled)

4. (currently amended) ~~Method~~ The method according to ~~one of the previous claims claim 1, characterized in that wherein~~ the printing material (2) is electrically discharged by a the discharge device (40) in a direction transverse to the transport direction of the printing material ~~(2)~~.

5. (currently amended) ~~Method~~ The method according to ~~one of the previous claims claim 1, characterized in that wherein~~ the toner discharge device (40) electrically discharges ~~the toner areas (4, 6, 8, 40, 60)~~

displaying high toner densities and ~~the areas (7)~~ of the printing material (2) displaying low toner ~~density~~ densities by means of individually energizable discharge areas (11) extending substantially across the entire length of the discharge device (10), each dischargeable area of the printing material having approximately the size of said individual energizable discharge area.

6. (currently amended) ~~Discharge~~ A discharge device (10) for a printing machine, in particular for an electrophotographic printing machine, for electrically discharging a printing material (2), to which toner has been applied on toner areas displaying higher toner densities than in other areas of the printing material displaying lower toner densities, characterized by the discharge device comprising a control device (15) for electrically discharging certain areas of the printing material (2) individual strips of a series of strips dividing the printing material, the width of the discharge device corresponding approximately to one individual strip of said series of strips dividing the printing material, and the discharge device extending at least across the width of the printing material.

7. (currently amended) ~~Discharge~~ The discharge device (10) for a printing machine ~~in accordance with Claim 5~~ according to claim 6, ~~characterized by~~ wherein said discharge device is divided into a number of discharge areas individually energizable ~~discharge areas (11) by the control device, said individual discharge areas extending substantially across the entire length of~~ on the discharge device (10).

8. (currently amended) ~~Discharge~~ The discharge device (10) for a printing machine ~~in accordance with Claim 5 or 6~~ according to claim 6 , ~~characterized in that the~~ wherein said discharge device (10) comprises a discharge unit for electrically discharging the printing material (2) with AC voltage and DC voltage.